

MINISTRY OF HEALTH PROMOTION

*2007-2008
Accessibility Plan*



ISSN #1911-3617

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Message from the Minister	3
Report on Achievements	5
2006 - 2007 Accessibility Improvement Initiatives	5
Commitments — Measures to Prevent New Barriers	13
Customer service	13
Employment	13
Communications and information	13
Built environment	14
Acts and regulations	14
Commitments — Barriers to be Addressed	15
Customer service	15
Employment accommodation	15
Communications and information	16
Built environment	16
For More Information	18

Introduction

In June 2005, the Ontario government took a strong stand on accessibility when it passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) into law.

The AODA lays out a comprehensive road map to make Ontario accessible to all people through the development, implementation and enforcement of new, mandatory accessibility standards for some of the most important aspects of people's lives.

Five key areas have been identified for the first accessibility standards: customer service, transportation, information and communications, the built environment, and employment.

The accessible customer service regulations were approved by the Lieutenant-Governor and will come into force on January 1, 2008.

An initial proposed standard on accessible transportation has been developed by the Transportation Standards Development Committee. It was posted for public review on June 27, 2007 and will be available for public comment until September 28, 2007.

The Standards Development Committee that will draft the proposed information and communications standard was established and began meeting in April, 2007. The committees developing the accessible built environment and accessible employment standards have been selected and will begin meeting in the fall of 2007.

While the government is moving forward to implement the AODA, there will be a transition period where government and the broader public sector will continue to meet their obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). These obligations will remain in effect until they are repealed and replaced by standards under the new act.

Under the ODA, Ontario government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and public transportation organizations are required to develop annual accessibility plans to make policies, practices, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. These plans must be made available to the public. Accessibility planning efforts to date have

developed a strong foundation for the development of accessibility standards that will mean real and effective change.

This document is the second annual accessibility plan developed by the Ministry of Health Promotion. It highlights the achievements of the 2006-07 plan and outlines the commitments for 2007-08 so that no new barriers are created and, over time, existing ones are removed.

This ministry intends to build on its achievements by implementing initiatives that support the government's commitment to continue to make Ontario an inclusive and accessible province where people of all abilities have a chance to fully achieve their potential.

Message from the Minister



As Minister of Health Promotion, I am pleased to provide you with my ministry's 2007-2008 Accessibility Plan.

At the Ministry of Health Promotion, we are committed to creating an accessible province – a province where the quality of life is enriched by the inclusion of all and our economy benefits from the contributions of everyone.

Under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 all public sector and broader public sector organizations are required by law to have an annual accessibility plan and to make it available to the public. This is the fifth year in which plans have been written and are being implemented by organizations such as ours across the province.

This year marks the second anniversary of the landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This important legislation requires the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards in key areas of daily living in the province.

Here at the Ministry of Health Promotion, we are building on the success of our previous plan and continue to look for ways to better meet the needs of people with disabilities who come into contact with this ministry, regardless of whether they are staff, members of the general public or ministry stakeholders.

My ministry is dedicated to improving accessibility through identifying, removing and preventing barriers, working together within our ministry, across government and in our relationships with our stakeholders.

We strongly believe that the achievements highlighted in this year's plan, as well as the commitments to make further improvements in the coming year, demonstrate the ministry's efforts to support the government's commitment to make Ontario's communities strong, vital and accessible to all people of all abilities.

If you have any comments or concerns, I encourage you to send them using the contact information located at the end of this document.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Jim Watson

Report on Achievements

2006 - 2007 Accessibility Improvement Initiatives

The Ministry of Health Promotion was successful in achieving planned commitments outlined in its first accessibility plan of 2006-2007. This section provides a status report.

Commitment

The ministry will ensure that ministry organized meetings and events at public venues provide accessibility for people with disabilities. The ministry will ensure that requests concerning accessibility for people with disabilities at venues hosting public-health-related meetings and events are dealt with in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Status Complete

Action

All ministry hosted meetings and events were held in accessible venues. Two examples include: The Provincial reception to recognize Team Ontario's winning performance at the 2007 Canada Winter Games was held in a fully accessible ground floor room at the Macdonald Block complex, instead of a more traditional venue with less accessibility. The Healthy Eating & Active Living Conference attracted over 650 stakeholders at the accessible Metro Toronto Convention Centre to showcase Ontario's Action Plan for Healthy Eating and Active Living.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

The ministry will appoint an executive lead and maintain an Accessibility Working Group with representation from each branch of the ministry. The Accessibility Working Group will be responsible for monitoring implementation of the Ministry of Health Promotion's 2006-2007 Accessibility Plan, and reporting results. The Ministry Accessibility Working Group will meet regularly to review the Accessibility Plan to identify customer service needs and discuss achievements and progress on ODA compliance.

Status Complete for 2006-2007 and Ongoing

Action

Meetings were held throughout 2006-2007 with the ministry executive lead and Accessibility Working Group. Representation was achieved from each branch of the ministry. The Accessibility Working Group continued throughout the year to monitor the Plans progress, discussed achievements and engaged discussions within branches.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

The Ministry Accessibility Working Group will consult with all parts of the ministry to report on accomplishments, brainstorm, and propose actions to be taken to remove barriers through building awareness activities. These activities will support increased staff awareness of accessibility issues and knowledge of how to share best practices for the provision of services to employees, clients and stakeholders with disabilities. This will be done through group activities, staff meetings, workshops and information on Internet and Intranet websites.

Status Complete for 2006-2007 and Ongoing

Action

The Accessibility Working Group awareness activities included discussions within branches and accessibility information posted on the websites.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

Accessibility will be reflected in the ministry's planning guidelines, and operational and results-based plans. Operational planning templates will contain a special note to the effect that "operational plans should reflect the ministry's commitment to continuously improve the accessibility of programs and services to people with disabilities."

Status Complete

Action

A new ministry operational plan template has been developed and implemented across all areas of the ministry. The special note has been incorporated in the revised ministry operational plan template. By way of program support, the ministry supported 113 disabled athletes of the 951 athletes funded by the Quest for Gold program. In addition, the ministry supported Paralympics Ontario through funding for the 2006 and 2007 winter and summer championships.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

The ministry will ensure that staff, stakeholders and clients are made aware that, upon request, ministry documents are available in alternate formats, e.g., Braille, large print, audio cassette and computer disk.

Status Completed for 2006-2007 and ongoing

Action

Communications branch continues to work with internal partners to provide alternate formats, when requested. The ministry provided voice recognition compatible application forms for the Quest for Gold Program that assisted visual impaired athletes.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

Ministry bargaining agents will be invited to provide input into future ministry ODA accessibility plans to help identify barriers facing employees with disabilities.

Status Complete for 2006-2007 and ongoing

Action

As part of the ministry's workplace partnership approach, ministry bargaining agents have been invited to provide input into future and ongoing ministry accessibility.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

The ministry will ensure new employees have the most current information on the ODA and resources. The ministry will prepare an orientation package with a strong accessibility awareness component for all new staff. In addition, the ministry will organize training for all staff.

Status Complete 2006-2007 and Ongoing

Action

Accessibility information is available for all staff on the ministry intranet website. The ministry orientation material for new staff is under development and will be available through a redesigned orientation website.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

The ministry will seek to increase accessibility in the workplace for ministry employees. The ministry's human resources will add a clause to "Offer of Employment" letters asking employees to notify their managers if they have accessibility needs.

Status Complete

Action

Template employment offer letters have been updated and are available as part of the ministry template document resources.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

The ministry will put in place processes for reviewing all proposed Internet and Intranet pages before they are posted to ensure they are accessible in accordance with the World Wide Web Consortium's web accessibility standards.

Status Complete

Action

Communications Branch reviewed and brought into compliance all internet and intranet website properties, and forms part of the business practice for all website postings.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

The ministry is: developing a process for receiving and responding to TTY inquiries; working to provide appropriate staff training in the use of TTY; working to ensure that TTY numbers are published on business cards, letterhead and the ministry website.

Status In progress

Action

The ministry is reviewing services available from vendors and staff requirements for delivery and training.

Timeframe

2007-2008

Rationale Implementation deferred until research into the most cost effective way for implementation, and staff resource options were identified.

Commitment

The ministry will seek to make continuous improvements to the accessibility of its offices. For example, the ministry will make appropriate selections and alterations with respect to furniture, seating and accessories as opportunities arise.

Status Complete 2006-2007 and ongoing

Action

The ministry completed a variety of modifications to workstations to ensure accessibility and barrier removal for staff.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitment

As part of the move of its offices to 777 Bay Street and 393 University Avenue, the ministry will seek to remove all identified barriers on the premises and ensure the offices are in compliance with the Ontario Building Code.

Status Complete

Action

The ministry moves were successfully completed with all identified barriers addressed, and in compliance with the Ontario Building Code. All staff were provided ergonomic services to individually fit each employee to their new workstation. The ergonomic fitting and assessment included additional workstation equipment, supports and modifications being supplied.

Timeframe

Fall 2006

Commitment

When drafting new acts and regulations, the ministry will consider accessibility and seek to prevent barriers.

Status Complete

Action

Changes to regulations were barrier free.

Timeframe

2006-2007

Commitments — Measures to Prevent New Barriers

In the coming year, the Ministry of Health Promotion continues with a commitment to assess its acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities. This section summarizes these commitments.

Customer service

- Continue to review alternative communication systems to facilitate access to information by the public and stakeholders.
- The e-training tool, May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities will be incorporated as part of staff education.

Employment

- Continue to promote awareness of accessibility throughout the ministry by sharing of information to staff and reminders to managers to complete the ODA online training.
- Implement the business practice that all applicants who have been selected for an interview for a position in the ministry are asked if they require any accommodation for the interview.

Communications and information

- To ensure the broadest access to information for all ministry websites are designed to prevent barriers. E.g. HealthyOntario.com
- The ministry will ensure that the design, delivery and administration of ministry delivered programs do not create barriers for people with disabilities.

Built environment

- Ensure that any accommodations planning undertaken by the ministry considers and identifies barrier-free compliance issues.

Acts and regulations

- The ministry will consider accessibility and seek to prevent barriers when drafting new acts and regulations.

Commitments — Barriers to be Addressed

The Ministry of Health Promotion commits to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities in the coming year. This section summarizes these commitments.

Customer service

Barrier

Policies, programs and services preventing people with disabilities from fully participating in ministry program and customer service activities.

Commitment

The Ministry of Health Promotion will continue to review policies and programs to ensure that they give due consideration to accessibility needs in the area of program access and customer service.

Responsibility

Program Branches

Timeline

2007-2008

Employment accommodation

Barrier

New managers require training to address employee accommodation and accessibility needs.

Commitment

Continue activities to increase accessibility for employees and to identify and remove barriers, which include ODA on-line training and ensure related policies, links and best practices, are available on the ministry intranet site.

Responsibility

Human Resources

Timeline

2007-2008

Communications and information

Barrier

Large type feature for all websites.

Commitment

The ministry will investigate the implementation of a large type feature for ministry websites.

Responsibility

Communications Branch

Timeline

2007-2008

Built environment

Barrier

There is a risk that changes to the physical work environment may introduce new barriers.

Commitment

Every reasonable effort will be made to make existing and future ministry premises barrier free.

Responsibility

Business Services and Controllershship Branch.

Timeline

2007-2008

For More Information

Questions or comments about the ministry's accessibility plan are always welcome.

Please phone:

Communications Branch

General inquiry number: 416-326-4846

Fax number: 416-326-4864

Ministry website address: www.mhp.gov.on.ca

Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web portal at: www.mcass.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

Alternate formats of this document are available free upon request from:

ServiceOntario Publications

777 Bay St., Suite M212, Market Level,

Toronto ON, M5G 2C8

Tel: (416) 326-5300

Out of town customers, except Ottawa, call: 1-800-668-9938

In Ottawa, call (613) 238-3630 or toll-free: 1-800-268-8758

TTY Service: 1-800-268-7095

Queen's Printer for Ontario

ISSN #1911-3617

Ce document est disponible en français.